

PERMISSION TO REDUCE TIME
FOR ELECTRONIC VOTING DURING
CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 5819,
SBIR/STTR REAUTHORIZATION
ACT

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that, during consideration of H.R. 5819 pursuant to House Resolution 1125, the Chair may reduce to 2 minutes the minimum time for electronic voting under clause 6 of rule XVIII and clauses 8 and 9 of rule XX.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 5819.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

SBIR/STTR REAUTHORIZATION ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 1125 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union for the consideration of the bill, H.R. 5819.

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IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union for the consideration of the bill (H.R. 5819) to amend the Small Business Act to improve the Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) program and the Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) program, and for other purposes, with Ms. DEGETTE in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The CHAIRMAN. Pursuant to the rule, the bill is considered read the first time.

General debate shall not exceed 1 hour, with 40 minutes equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Small Business and 20 minutes equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Science and Technology.

The gentleman from New York (Ms. VELÁZQUEZ) and the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. CHABOT) each will control 20 minutes, and the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. WU) and the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. EHLERS) each will control 10 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York.

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Madam Chairman, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Madam Chairman, this year, we celebrate Small Business Week in the face

of harsh realities that come with an economic downturn. But it is important to remember that the Nation's 26 million entrepreneurs have always led America's way to economic recovery and sustained growth. That was the case during the last slowdown, when the technology sector—led by small startups—provided the foundation for the booming economy of the 1990s. It can be true again today.

Over the past decades, research conducted by entrepreneurs in the Small Business Innovation Research and the Small Business Technology Transfer programs has bolstered every area of American life. The important contributions of these small research firms span such varied disciplines as national security, energy efficiency, and public health infrastructure.

The measure that is before the House today reauthorizes SBIR and STTR. Together, the programs make up the largest government-wide R&D initiative, and they can help us emerge from weak economic times yet again. Just as importantly, the reauthorization will ensure these successful programs continue to spur innovation and job growth, while keeping America at the forefront of the global marketplace.

The last time these programs were reauthorized, the Internet was in its infancy, and the term "Google" was an obscure mathematical concept. Today, the Internet is a part of everyday life, and Google is one of the best known and largest companies on the planet.

Our legislation modernizes SBIR/STTR. It ensures small firms can contribute to our country's most pressing research and development challenges. The bill recognizes that, while many good ideas come from large companies and universities, it is American small businesses who are our primary source of innovation. These entrepreneurs, not just Boeing or MIT, develop the type of products and services that meet the needs of the new economy.

H.R. 5819 allows small businesses to continue bringing their critically important ideas from the laboratory to the marketplace. The bill also offers targeted resources for technical assistance and ensures small firms are not discriminated against because of their business model or type of financing.

Last, but not least, H.R. 5819 increases the number of SBIR and STTR applications from rural areas. It also promotes participation by small businesses that are owned by women, service disabled veterans and minorities.

Moreover, this reauthorization enables a greater number of small research companies to advance the sort of innovation that saves lives. As a result, dozens of patient groups support the bill. They include the ALS and Alpha-1 Associations, the Caring Voice Coalition, the Coalition of Heritable Disorders of Connective Tissue, the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation, the National Organization for Rare Disorders, Parent Project Muscular Dystrophy and the Tuberous Sclerosis Alliance.

The same holds true for a broad array of business groups, representing everything from the agricultural sector to energy and technology organizations. This diverse group of supporters includes the American Electronic Association, the Biotechnology Industry Organization, the Association for Manufacturing Technology, the U.S. Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, and the U.S. Women's Chamber of Commerce.

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Madam Chairman, in passing this legislation, we will ensure the SBIR and STTR awards remain competitive from top-notch research and continue to produce cutting-edge breakthroughs.

There is no better way to celebrate Small Business Week than to support the work of entrepreneurs. That is especially true when it means saving lives, creating high-paying jobs for Americans, reducing our trade deficit, and getting our economy back on track.

I urge my colleagues to join with me and Mr. CHABOT in celebrating Small Business Week by voting for this important measure.

Madam Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CHABOT. Madam Chairman, I rise in support of H.R. 5819, the Small Business Innovation Research and Small Business Technology Transfer Programs Reauthorization Act.

These two programs are highly successful Federal initiatives designed to encourage economic growth and innovation within the small business community by assisting with the funding that is critical at the startup and developmental stages of a small company. Not only do they spur growth in individual companies, the programs stress the importance of the Small Business Committee's and the entire Federal Government's commitment to expand and diversify research opportunities for small businesses.

Created in 1982, the SBIR program offers competition-based awards to stimulate technological innovation among small private sector businesses while providing government agencies with new, cost-effective, technical and scientific solutions to meet their diverse needs. This program is not only critical to the unique needs of each of the participating Federal agencies but also to our national economy. Small businesses renew the U.S. economy by introducing new products and lower cost methods of doing business, sometimes with substantial economic benefits. They play a key role in introducing technologies to the market, often responding quickly to new market opportunities. Some of our Nation's greatest technological innovations were originated by small business owners tinkering in their workshops, including two very famous Ohioans, the Wright brothers.

Our committee worked very hard to produce the legislation we have before us today. We held several hearings on